

" TOBY ON THE JOB "

Property of Johnnie Speer.

" TOBY ON THE JOB "

CAST

TOBY ..... COMEDY  
MR. S. B. BELDING ..... CHARACTER  
ANNA BELDING ..... HEAVY OR CHARACTER  
BETTY MARTIN ..... LEAD  
LAURA  
HAZEL  
MERJORIE ..... } STENOGRAPHERS  
ALICE

SETTING

FIRST SCENE. OFFICE WAITING ROOM.

REMAINING SCENES. INTERIOR OF PRIVATE OFFICE.

Elaborate office in large city.

PROPS

Sure fire gun

Telephone

Desk

Typewriter

Newspaper

Screen

Bouquet of flowers

Letters and papers

" TOBY ON THE JOB "

TO BY

(DISCOVERED ON SLEEPING LIGHTLY. A NEWSPAPER IS IN HIS HAND. HE NODS. AND NEARLY FALLS OFF CHAIR. WAKES UP) Whew! I almost went to sleep. I been waitin' here in this darn office all night so I could be the first one to get that job as stenographer. By golly if I don't get a job pretty soon I'm gonna turn into a skeleton. (LOOKS AT CLOCK) It's eight o'clock. Nobody else has showed up for the job. I guess I'll be the one to get it. (NOISE OF GIRLS TALKING AND CHATTERING OFF R.) What the heck is that? Sounds like a bunch of haw down on the farm. (ALICE MARJORIE HAZEL, AND LURA ALL ENTER. DRESSED IN COATS FOR THE STREET.)

HAZEL

Well, I certainly hope I get the job.

LURA

Well, I think I'll be the one that will get it. I think I know what this man wants in the line of a stenographer.

HAZEL

Well, you'll not get it.

LURA

Oh yes I will.

HAZEL

Oh no you won't.

MARJORIE

Why don't you two stop arguing and go home? Naturally Mr. Belcing is going to hire me when he gets a look at me.

HAZEL

Yes but when he sees your wokrk, he'll fireyou.

MARJORIE

Oh I don't know. I've been told that I was good.

HAZEL

Don't let 'em kid you. Any time a guy hires you for a stenographer he's expecting something on the side.

MARJORIE

Say do you mean that for a dirty crack? Wif you do I'll pull every hair out of your head.

HAZEL

Try it.

ALICE

Go ahead and hit her.

HAZEL

Where do you get in on this? (THEY ALL START ADLIBBING ARGUMENT)

TOBY

(GETS IN BETWEEN THEM) Hey, turn off the noise. (THEY HIT HIM AND FIGHT BACK AND FORTH. HE GETS IN THE MIDDLE OF IT. FINALLY GETS A NOUENT ROLLS UP SLEEVES AND SPARS OFF) Come on! I'm gonna

separate you ganes from your underwear in a minute. Calm down: 2  
Are you all of you here for the job here?

ALICE

Why of course we are. What are you doing here?

TOBY

Shucks fire I've been here ever since nine o'clock last night  
so I could be the first one to get the job.

MARJORIE

Well, look at the green onion that wants a job. Say you poor boob,  
this is a woman's job. What do you know about stenograph?

TOBY

I'll bet I know as much as you do. ~~dashdashed~~

MARJORIE

Why you country ruben, I was graduated from a business college.

TOBY

That's nothing on me. I was cultivated on a farm in Missouri.

MARJORIE

I thought so. You look like you hadn't got all the hay out of  
your ears yet.

TOBY

~~dashdashed~~ That's all right if it wasn't for us farmer's you wouldn't  
eat. Where do you think your food comes from?

MARJORIE

Why from the restaurant of course.

TOBY

That shows how much brains you got.

MARJORIE

A girl that's got what I've got doesn't need brains

TOBY

(LOOKS HER OVER) Razzberries I wouldn't give you two cents for it!

HAZEL

(LOOKS OFF R.) Here comes the big boss!

MR. BALDING

(OFF R.) Good morning, how do you do. Nice day. (ENTERS BRISKLY  
LOOKS THEM ALL OVER) Well, I see I have a few applicants to my  
advertisement in the newspaper. Well, line up. I'll interview you  
one at a time. (EXITS INTO PRIVATE OFFICE L.)

TOBY

(STARTS L.) I'm first.

LAURA

(GRABS HIM THROWS HIM ASIDE) No I'm first! (EACH GIRL ARGUES THEY  
ARE FIRST AND ALL TRY TO GET FIRST ONE TO L. EACH TIME TOBY  
GETS THROWN BACK TO THE END OF THE LINE. FINALLY HE GETS DOWN ON  
HIS KNEES AND CRAWLS THROUGH THEIR LEGS TO THE END OF THE LINE AND  
STANDS UP) (MR. BALDING ENTERS )

TOBY

I'm first!

BEIDING

Where's your manners? Ladies are first.

TOBY

Yes, but I was here first. I been here ever since last night.

BEIDING

I'm sorry. I'm afraid you've waited in vain.

TOBY

No I waited in the office. Give me the job Mister. I need it. Honest I do. I'm a good worker. I can do anything. Come on tell me what to do.

BEIDING

Please. I want to look the ladies over. (PUSHES TOBY OVER TO R.) (LOOKS AT THE GIRLS' LOOKS DOWN AT THEIR LEGS) Now girls what I need is a stenographer with brains.

TOBY

Well, what the heck are you lookin' down there for? I think this guy wants something else besides a stenographer.

BEIDING

(TO ALICE) Have you had much experience.

ALICE

(GIGGLES) Oh my goodness yes.

BEIDING

Well, of course you know I have to have a woman in my office with some appearance. Now--(LOOKS HER SHAPE OVER)

ALICE

(GIGGLES) Well, won't I do. (STICKS REAR OUT)

BEIDING

No, I'm sorry but I don't think you will. It's not exactly what I want.

ALICE

(GETS HUFFY) Well, it suits me. I didn't want to work any more. I had a date with a man for this afternoon any way.

TOBY

Well, what the devil are you takin' up the office space for. Come on, Mister, hire me. I need a job.

BEIDING

Get back, boy, you're annoying me. (TO MARJORIE) Ah now you are more like it.

MARJORIE

Oh I knew you'd say that. (UP VERY CLOSE TO HIM) Every where I've worked, I've always done well. And really, I'm a awfully good fellow on a party. (TICKLES HIM UNDER THE CHIN)

BEIDING

Well, now --ahem! I think you are just what I want. I believe you can qualify.

(TURNS AROUND TO SHOW OFF FOR HIM) Oh I think you'll see my qualification.

TOBY

Who the hell could miss it?

BEELDING

Yes, I believe you are what I want. You stand aside over here. I'll take you in my office in a moment. (LOOKS OVER OTHER GIRLS) Now, girls, let me see--

TOBY

Yeah show him what you got, girls. By gosh a man aint got a chance for this job.

HAZEL

Don't you think I'll do. (BUS. OF SHOWING OFF SHAPE FOR HIM)

BEELDING

No, I don't like that.

LAURA

Well, how about my qualifications? (SHOWS OFF SAME BUS.)

BEELDING

No, I don't like this.

TOBY

(IMITATES GIRLS POSE) Well, maybe you'd like to try a little of this!

BEELDING

Girls, you may all go. I've chosen my stenographer. That's all for today. (TO TOBY) You may go too. I haven't any position for you

TOBY

How come? How come?

BEELDING

Well, I don't use men in my office., I always hire women. That's business, boy, business!

TOBY

Well, it's a hell of a business. That's just what's wrong with the damn country today. Instead of making it possible for a man to get work, it's a bunch of scented lady chasers like you that have to give all the work to a bunch of females so you can feel their legs, and play around with their do-dads. Right now walking the streets of this city are men with brains THAT couldn't get a job to save their souls from purgatory, and why? Because of a bunch of nit wit janes like you are taking the work. (POINTS THEM OUT) You don't need this job, you just want it so you can buy some more new dresses. You've got a boy friend to support you, you've got a husband. Look at me I got a ~~boy~~ to keep, and you are robbing ~~them~~ of food that's what you're doing. Get the heck out of here all you. Go on. Beat it! I'm sore. (THEY ALL EXIT LAURA IS LAST OUT SHE LIFTS HER DRESS A LITTLE BIT AND TOBY SLAPS AT IT) I'll smack it off.

BEELDING

My what a temper you have, young man.

5  
TOBY

You darn right. I'm sore because you give that job to that chicken shavin' over there. (POINTS TO MARJORIE) And she don't need it. In shucks I'm disgusted. When I was a kid, they told me to eat lots of brain food, so I could grow brains, and then I'd get a job. But I'm gonna stop growin' brains. That aint what you need nowadays. I'm gonna grow something else.

BELDING

What are you going to grow?

TOBY

(POINTS TO MARJORIE) I'm gonna grow some of what she's got! (EXITS)

\*\*\*\*\* NUMBER ONE \*\*\*\*\*  
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BELDING

(DISCOVERED ON IN PRIVATE OFFICE WITH MARJORIE) Of all the dubm useless stenographers you are it. Look at this letter. You've balled it up something terrible.

MARJORIE

Well, I didn't know I was going to have to work when I got this job.

BELDING

Well, my dear girl, I at least expected you to be able to write a letter when I dictated it to you. I've got to have some work done. Oh, if I only had the stenographer I used to have.

MARJORIE

Well, if you don't like my work, I'll quit.

BELDING

You're fired!

TOBY

(ENTERS) And I'll take the job! (SITS DOWN AT THE DESK) Tell me what to do.

MARJORIE

(AT DOOR) Well, I hope you do well here. (LAUGHS AND EXITS)

TOBY

See, I told you that Jane wasn't no good. Now I can have the job, can't I?

BELDING

Well, I've got to have some one that can get these letters out for me. Can you write on a typewriter?

TOBY

Mister, I'm so hungry I could write on a piano.

BELDING

How's your shorthand?

TOBY

Huh?

BELDING

How's your shorthand?

TOBY

I aint got none.

BELDING

What no shorthand?

TOBY

Uh huh, both my hands are the same size.

BELDING

Oh I can see you're going to do well here. Listen, you don't know anything. What's the idea of trying to get this job?

TOBY

Because I'm hungry. I aint had anything to eat for a week, and believe me I'm weak. Please give me a chance Mister, I'll make good.

BELDING

Oh well I haven't time to get a stenographer so I'll let you try it. Make this letter down.

TOBY

All right shoot!

BELDING

(READS FROM LETTER) Bigold Butler Company; (TOBY WRITES ON TYPEWRITER) Have you got that?

TOBY

Almost. I'm kinda have a hard time finding all the letters on this darn thing.

BELDING

(HOLDS HEAD. WALKS UP AND DOWN) Oh good night I don't want I'm going to do if I don't get this letter off.

TOBY

I've got that down.

BELDING

Don't put that down you fool. Cross that out. (TOBY DOES) Now the address six ought ought six, Hot Springs. Now double space. Dear sirs. I am hoping to see you on a business deal. I will see that you have your fees in advance, and that you get stipulated on the plan. Your instinct is good, and I know you have a hunch on buying a share of those rubber balls stock. In your last letter you said your wife had not been feeling good, and you had failed to write me. If you do not answer I will know your wife is not feeling good. If she not feeling good let me know. Rubber balls are a good investment but I shall tell you later. I hope you will not break your contract with the Beechnut Firm. Singed. S B, Belding. Have you got it all down.

TOBY

Well, I done the best I could. Some of them letters on this typewriter are shure hard to find.

BELDING

Let me see what you've got. (TAKES LETTER) (READS) Big Old But Company. (TEARS HAIR) Oh good night that's wrong. It's Butler Company. Not But company.

TOBY

Well, that's just one mistake. I think I'm doing pretty good.

BEDLING

Oh. (READS) Cross that out. Address six o six hot springs. double space. De ark~~kkkk~~ Si. I am hopping to see you on a bus deal. I will see that you fleas in your pants, and that you get stiff legged on the pan. Your stink is good, and I know you have a hump on buying a share of those rubber ~~ghkk~~ balls stock. In your last ladder you said your wiff had not been feeding good, and you had failed to write me. If ~~yaukkddhdtdk~~ ~~anard~~ ~~Idk~~ ~~will~~ ~~likandk~~ your wife is not feeling good rubber balls. I hope you do not break your contract with the nut singed B. S. Belding. (WALKS UP AND DOWN RAVING) Oh this is too much. I'm going screwy. Oh why did I ever let my last stenographer go. I'll never get another one like her. (Betty enters AND STANDS LISTENING)

TOBY

Did I get some of it wrong?

BEDLING

Some of it? It was all wrong. You're hopeless! Terrible! ~~Ekk~~ Oh if I only had my old stenographer I used to have, I'd---I'd-- (TURNS AND SEES HER) Betty! You've come back. Come here and sit down at once, and get these letters out for me.

BETTY

But, Mr. Belding, you remember you fired me.

BEDLING

Yes, but now I'm hiring you. I never knew there were so many dumb-bells until you quit. Oh I'm so glad to see you that I could kiss you. (STARTS TO HUG HER)

BETTY

Stop. Remember, Mr. Belding, that is why I quit before. I'm your stenographer, and I'm here to do my work, but I'm not here to be made love to by you.

BEDLING

Don't be so touchy. Remember you've got a family to support and I guess you've found out jobs aren't so easy to get.

BETTY

Yes, I have. I've walked these streets every day trying to find work, and that is the only reason I came back here to beg you to let me stay. I can't let my ~~father~~ and mother and two little brothers go hungry. You know that and that is why you've tried to take advantage of me. Oh I-- (STARTS TO TURN AWAY AND CRY)

BEDLING

Oh there, there don't cry. Go on copy these letters for me, and I'll try and behave myself. (TO TOBY) Get up, boy? I don't need you.

TOBY

(SIGHS) Fired again. Gee whiz, Mister, aint there nothing I can do.

BEDLING

Yes, get the hell out of here. (EXITS L.)

TOBY

(GAPS UP) Just when I thought I was gonna get a square at a square

meal then I lose my job. Well, I--I'm glad you got the (8)  
job, little girl. I--I guess you need it party bad, if you got a  
family to support and everything. I---well---so long. (STARTS OUT)

BETTY

Oh wait a minute. You poor boy, I'll bet you're hungry.

TOBY

How could you guess it.

BETTY

Never mind. Here I'm going to give you part of my lunch money so  
you can go and eat something. (TAKES SOME CHANGE OUT OF POCKET BOOK)  
Here's fifteen cents.

TOBY

Aw, no I couldn't do that. Thanks. You're the first white person  
I've met since I've been in this town. But I couldn't take your  
money.

BETTY

Oh please take it. I know you must be terribly hungry. Won't you  
take the money--please? (HOLDS MONEY OUT TO HIM APPEALINGLY)

TOBY

I---I--no--I can't. I never take money from women. I--(MUGS. SHE  
STARTS TO PUT MONEY BACK IN POCKET BOOK. TOBY GRABS IT) Gimme that  
dough! (EXITS QUICKLY. SHE STANDS SMILING)

\*\*\*\*\* NUMBER TWO \*\*\*\*\*  
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(ENTERS. BETTY IS DISCOVERED TOBY  
ON WRITING ON TYPEWRITER. HAS A BUNCH OF  
FLOWERS) Hello. Look what I brought you.

BETTY

Oh what lovely flowers. But Toby, you didn't spend the money I gave  
you for something to eat on these flowers, did you?

TOBY

Naw. Do you like 'em?

BETTY

They're beautiful. But they must have been expensive. How much did  
they cost?

TOBY

I don't know. The guy I swiped 'em from, didn't have the price on  
'em.

BETTY

Oh, Toby, you mustn't steal.

TOBY

By gosh I've just about come to the conclusion that's the only way to  
get anything in this world now adays. The crooked you are the better  
you get along. Shucks, I can't get a job. I'm willin' to work, and  
nobody will hire me. I gotta live. I got a notion to take a lead  
pipe and just go out and start knocking people on the dome.

BETTY

Yes, and then you'd end up in jail.

9  
Well, by gosh I'd have a place to eat and sleep then.

BETTY  
(FIXES HIS TIE) But, Toby, I don't want you to do that. I wouldn't want to see you behind the bars. It would hurt me terribly.

TOBY  
Aw gee would it honest.

BETTY  
(LOOKING HIM IN THE EYE) Honest!

TOBY  
Gosh don't look at me like that. Every time you look at me with them eyes of yours, you burn a button off my B. V. D.'s.

BETTY  
(LAUGHS LIGHTLY) You funny boy!

TOBY  
Boy? How big do the men get where you come from?

BETTY  
Oh I don't know why you seem like a boy to me. But you do. Some how or other I feel like I could be a mother to you.

TOBY  
Well, I wish you could be; you might come in handy when I get hungry. Aw I don't mean that. I mean I wish you could be a mother to me. I never really had much of a mother or father. You see my mother died when I was just about a year old, and my old man left when I was just a few months old. You see mom caught him messin' around another woman so folks say, and she drove him away. After he left she got sick from grievin' over him and wasn't no time at all till she died too, and then I just knocked around from one place to another. Only bringin' up I had was a sweet old lady back in Chillicothe Missouri. She raised me up, and I supported her by workin' on a farm near then. Then I lost my job, cause the farmers crops failed. and I came here to the city to get work. so I could send that old lady some money, ~~but I can't~~ to live on, but I aint even been able to earn enoug to buy a hot dog for myself.--

BETTY  
Oh I wish I could help you to get a job. I can help you a little bit. You may come to my home and live with my brothers and sisters, and my mother. I'll see that you have a place to eat and sleep at least.

TOBY  
Gee whiz you might just as well marry me, if you're gonna support me like that. Say I'm gonna try and make that old guy you work for give me a job. Doggone it there ought to be something I could do around here. Could you speak to him about gettin' me a job.

BETTY  
Well, I don't know. You see I have a terrible time holding my job. Not because of my work, but because he always wants to make love to me--

TOBY  
If he tries it again, I'm gonna sock him on the jaw----

BETTY

No, you mustn't do that, because then he would fire me. I have to work. I tried to get another job, but it's next to impossible to find work nowadays. So the only thing I can do is work here and try to keep him in his place. But sometimes I get frightened. He looks at me with such a strange glint to his eyes. That deep piercing-- look--

TOBY

Yeah I know--the dirty pup!

BETTY

So sinister---so searching---it chills me---You know the kind of a look?

TOBY

Yeah--like a hungry dog after a piece of fresh meat!

BETTY

He told me today that I would have to stay after office hours to do some work for him. He said it would be late at night. I'm not afraid of him in the day time, but a night--I--

TOBY

Well, don't you worry, baby---Toby will be right here on the job-- and you aint gonna be harmed--not one head on your hair, I mean one hair on your head.

BETTY

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Toby, you're a dear.

TOBY

No I aint I'm a bear cat!

BEIDING

(ENTERS L.O Well, what's going on here. Young lady, I think you have work to do. I didn't hire you to entertain people.

TOBY

And I didn't come here to be entertained! I come to get a job. Please! I can do. I'm a darn good errand boy. You could use me to keep the office clean. Look--now like you want to see somebody in some other office here in the building I could run down and tell 'em you wanted to talk with 'em; couldn't I?

BEIDING

Yes, you could, but I don't need an errand boy. All I need to do if I want some one in another office, is press a button. Machinery does all of that errand work nowadays. In another ten years, there won't be a thing that machinery can't do. Haven't you heard that little poem about modern progress? It goes:

"This is a fast and furious age we now are living in,  
Steam has superseded; electricity now is king.  
Fifty thousand horse power is quite a common thing.  
We have our horseless carriages driven by the rich  
And our women wear silk hose yet they never sew a stitch.  
We're eating creamery butter that never saw a cow.  
The belly ache we use to have is appendicitis now.  
We are sending wireless messages over land and sea.  
We're getting music from pianos yet we never touch a key.  
Progress is our motto. Modern times have come to stay---

(11)

TOBY

But thank God we still get our babies in the good old fashioned way.

BELDING

That will be enough out of you. Go on and get out of my office. I can't be bothered by you. I've got to give my stenographer some dictation.

TOBY

Some what?

BELDING

Dictation. I haven't given it to her for some time. I usually give it to her about this time in the afternoon.

TOBY

Does she take it?

BELDING

Why of course she does. I give it to her in the morning, then again before noon, and two or three times in the afternoon.

TOBY

Gee, whiz no wonder she had to quit.

BETTY

(SMILING) Toby, are you sure you know what dictation is?

TOBY

No, but if it 's what I think it is, he aint gonna give it to you no more. Listen here, guy, that's my girl. And some of these days she gonna be wearing a great big diamond on her right fore finger, and when people ask who that classy bab walinking down the street is? I'll tell 'em that Mrs. Tobias. Waterworth.

BETTY

Oh don 't be too sure of yourself! How do you know I'll be your wife, Toby? How do you know I'll say yes?

TOBY

Well, how do you know I'll ask you?

BELDING

Say enough of this. Go on and get out of here before I throw you out

TOBY

I've been thrown out of better joints than this. I'll go but just remember this--that's my girl and you keep your hands off.

BELDING

Bah you're not far from a fool.

TOBY

Nope not over two feet from one.

BELDING

(KICKS AT HIM) Get out of here.

TOBY

(DUCKS) Never touched me! (EXITS R. C.)

BELDING

(LAUGHS) That poor sap. Betty, I must request that you don't allow

that simp around here any more.

12

BETTY

(INDIGNANTLY) He's not a simp; he's a good kid.

BELDING

(CLOSE TO HER? PATS HER ON THE SHOULDER) Yes, but then maybe I am a little bit jealous. Now, Betty, why do you want to treat me so coldly. I've been nice to you, and there are a good many things I could do for you if you'd only let me. (TRIES TO TAKE HER IN HIS ARMS)

BETTY

Please, Mr. Belding. You have a wife at home. Why don't you be true to her?

BELDING

Oh she doesn't understand me. She's so cold and --and--(SUDDENLY TAKES HER IN HIS ARMS. SHE STRUGGLES)(ANNA BELDING ENTERS)

ANNA

Samuel!

BELDING

My God. My wife! (PUSHES BETTY AWAY FROM HIM) Miss Martin, how dare you assume so much. My dear, I assure you I had no part in what you just saw. (TOBY ENTERS)

ANNA

I am quite sure that you didn't. Samuel you must discharge this cheap little tramp at once.

TOBY

Say who the heck you calling those names to?

BELDING

Are you in again? Get out of here before I call a policeman.

TOBY

And if you do I'll tell your wife here what I know about you and that girl.

BELDING

You---you--

ANNA

Young boy, I do not know who you are, but I can assure you that you could tell me nothing about my husband and this woman. It is quite plain that she is like all other little hussies who work for their living. She thinks that she can elevate herself by giving her attentions to the man she works for.

BETTY

See here, madam, I don't have to take your insults. Sure I work for my living, but I'm not a cheap hussy, and if you say that I'll--

TOBY

Don't waste words, Betty, sock her on the kisser!

ANNA

Samuel, discharge this person at once before she tries to blackmail

Such women as here have been known to take a man's entire fortune. 13

TOBY  
Listen, you got this all wrong, lady. This girl aint tryin' to take your good man--she-

ANNA  
Enough! I have eyes in my head.

TOBY  
Yes but they're cock eyed.

BELDING  
My wife trusts me, don't you, dear.

ANNA  
No I do not. As far as you are concerned this woman could have you if she wants you, but I don't want her to blackmail you for money. Possibly its too late now. I know that you don't love me any more.

BELDING  
Oh yes I do, darling. Honestly. I'm true to you, really I am. And its wonderful of you not to accuse me of having anything to do with this girl, why some women would want to divorce their husband on just such an incident as this. I'm glad you're not jealous dear.

ANNA  
Oh but I am. And if I thought that ythis woman meant anything to you---I'd---I'd kill you. (BELDING

BELDING  
(MEEKLY) Yes, my dear.

ANNA  
Now discharge her at once. And get rid of this awful person also.

TOBY  
Who the hell do you think you are.

ANNA  
I am a society woman!

TOBY  
Razzberries I'll bet your just another hasher gone wrong.

ANNA  
I shall leave here. The odor in this room is becoming unbearable.

TOBY  
Well, we'll have it fumigated when you leave. (SEE EXITS. GOES OVER TO BETTY WHO IS CRYING) Oh geedon't cry, Betty, I--

BELDING  
Get out of here. I want to talk to my stenographer, and I don't want you here. Get out. I mean business. I've got a gun. (GUN BUS.)

TOBY  
All right, I'll go--but I'm comin' back, and I'm bringin' a gun that's twice as big as yours is. (EXITS)

BELDING  
(PUTS HAND ON BETTY'S SHOULDER) Now don't cry Betty. I had to do what I done to keep my wife from sueing me for a divorce, and tying

up all of my money. Now, Betty, don't be a fool. You've got 14 to think of your folks. And little girl, I'm going to give you a great break. How would you like a swell apartment for your folks to live in, plenty of money, and you won't have to work a bit.

BETTY

No thank you. I know what the price of that swell apartment you offer is. No I'll leave--your wife told you to fire me, and I--I'll go--I'll find a job somewhere--I'll have to.

BUILDING

You tried it before and failed, and you'll fail again. I'll tell you why. When you quit me the last time. I sent your name out to every important employer in this city. You were black listed. And that's what I'll do again. You couldn't get a job in this town to save your soul. Now think it over. (TAKES HOLD OF HER)

BETTY

Let me go!

BUILDING

You certainly think a lot of your mother, and your little sisters and brothers don't you. I suppose you would let them starve rather than be a good fellow with me. Well, you're going to come through the way I want you to or else I'll see that your mother starves! Now think it over.

BETTY

(DROPS IN CHAIR SOBBING) You've got me--I'm whipped. God! I can hardly make both ends meet the way things are now. I--what do you want me to do?

BUILDING

Come to my office here tonight after seven. We'll talk things over, and I'm sure you won't regret it. Remember tonight at seven--will you be here?

BETTY

I---yes! (BOWS HEAD)

BUILDING

(SMILES) Good! (EXITS L.)

TOBY

(ENTERS) By gosh I'm back again, and if wants to shoot me I'll swallow them bullets and spit 'em back at him. What did he do to you?

BETTY

Nothing--I--he wants me to come here tonight after office hours.

TOBY

You aint gonna do it, are you?

BETTY

Oh I've got to. I've got to. He's black listed me, toby. I have no chance in this town without his help. I've got to make a living for my mother. She's old and--oh I do anything for her. Don't you understand. My little mother means everything to me. I've tried to make a living honestly--I've tried to live and be decent, but I'm whipped. God gave me my mother, and he willed it that I should support her--even at the price of my very soul. So you must go Toby, and don't try to interfere---please try to understand. y

TOBY

I---well -I guess if its for your mother, and--say I'm gonna stay here and see what that guy does.

BETTY

No you must go. I must meet him alone/

TOBY

Well, alright. But I wish I could make that stuck up old lady of his see that he's the one that's a crook and not you. Maybe I will yet. Don't you be afraid Betty, you're aint no harm gonna come to you--not with Toby on the job. And Betty, do me a favor will you. When you go to meet this guy tonight, will you wear something I get for you?

BETTY

What is it you want me to wear, Toby?

TOBY

A pair of cast iron drawers! (EXITS)

~~NUMBER THREE~~

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BELDING

(DISCOVERED. WALKING UP AND DOWN. LOOKS AT WATCH) Seven o'clock, she should be here. (BETTY ENTERS) Ah there you are, and right on the dot. Now come, come, don't look so frightened. Sit down. I'm going to give you a little drink.

BETTY

Oh no --no I don't want it--Oh, Mr. Belding, I can't go through with this--

BELDING

Now what's the matter with you? Am I such a terrible fellow that you can't stand me?

BETTY

It isn't that, but it's--it's not right. You're married and--Oh why can't you take pity on me--don't black list me---I've got to work I've got to--

BELDING

Now now, don't start crying. Think of all I'm going to do for you and that mother of yours. Now we're going to have a little party, just you and me--(GOES TO DOOR. LOOKS IN)

BETTY

Don't lock that door---Let me out of here. (UP TO DOOR)

BELDING

Don't be a fool. You delicious little devil. I've been waiting for this chance almost from the day you came to work from me.

BETTY

Oh why do you want me?

BELDING

I don't know? I guess because you didn't seem to want to let me have you. The things I couldn't have in life are always what I've wanted most, and I'

to have you in spite of you, my wife, or the whole damn world. 16  
TAKES HER IN HIS ARMS. HOLDS HER AND KISSES HER PASSIONATELY. SHE  
STRUGGLES)

ANNA

(STEPS FROM BEHIND SCREEN WITH A GUN IN HER HAND) You beast!

BELDING

Anna, how did you get there?

TOBY

(STEPS FROM BEHIND SCREEN) I brought her here!

ANNA

Yes, I wouldn't believe him, but he made me come, and now I've seen just what a cur you are. You've lied and deceived me. and you're going to pay for it---

BELDING

Put that gun down. Look out. (FRIGHTENED) Don't be fool.

ANNA

I'm going to kill you.

BELDING

My God! Don't Please--(SHE FIRES GUN. HE DROPS TO THE FLOOR) OH!

ANNA

(SUDDENLY REALIZES WHAT SHE HAS DONE. DROPS GUN ) Oh I've killed him!

TOBY

You darn right---you made a bull's eye! (PICKS UP GUN)

ANNA

Oh what shall I do? What shall I do? They'll hang me for this!

TOBY

You darn right they will. They'll give you a rope necktie.

ANNA

Oh they mustn't do it. I can't die! Think of the disgrace. The Scandal! Why did I lose my head?

BETTY

Oh, Toby, why did you do it?

TOBY

Because I wanted to help you out. The rat needed what he got. I give her the gun to shoot him with. Listen. I think that's the wagon coming now---

ANNA

(SCREAMS) No! No! I didn't do it. I didn't do it. (POINTS TO HIM) You did it. The gun is in your hand. You did it.

TOBY

Hey--don't try to pull that stuff on me.

ANNA

You did you did. I'll tell the cops that when they get here. Oh let me out of here---I'm going crazy. I didn't want to kill him. I loved him\*\*\*

17

BETTY  
(HYSTERICALLY) Oh, Toby, whay did you do it. Oh oh. (BOTH WOMEN  
ARE CRYING HYSTERICALLY)

TOBY  
Hey stop your durn crying all of you. It aint as bad as it seems.  
He aint dead.

ANNA  
Yes he is. Yes he is. I saw him drop. He's dead.

TOBY  
He aint eather. I'll prove it. Hey, get with it? Are you dead?

BELDING  
(VOICE QUAVERING) I don't know yet!

TOBY  
Get up here. You aint even shot. This was all just a little scheme  
of mine to scare you. That gun that you used Mrs. Belding, was  
loaded with blanks.

ANNA  
Blanks!

TOBY  
Yes, I did this to teach this no good son of a gun a lesson, and  
throw a scare in him, so he would be trying to ruin some more innocent  
girls.

BELDING  
You--you mean I'm not shot. Oh I am too. She shot me. I know she  
did. Look I'm all bloody.

TOBY  
No you aint. You're just scareed stiff that's all.

BELDING  
I tell you I'm all bloody. Look all over my pants. Look!

TOBY  
Hell that aint blood.--bllood's red! You're just scared. Now, you  
see, madam, your husband was trying to force this girl by every hook  
and crook. He's the guilty one. And now I hope you've both learned  
a lesson.

ANNA  
Oh yes I see it all now. Oh what a fright I had. (TO BETTY) My  
dear girl, I want you try and forgive me. I shall do every thing I  
can to right the wrong my husband has done you. Samuel, you should  
have learned something from this indident.

BELDING  
I have. I want you both to forgive me.

ANNA  
No I shall never forgive you. I'll never live with you again. I'm  
not going to divorce you---but from now you and I shall live our  
separate lives as strangers.

TOBY  
Now that aint no way to do. Gee, whix, why is it when people have

everything in the world to be happy with they can't do it. Gosh, 18 you two have got money, you don't have to worry where your next meal is coming from or nothing. You two ought to have a home and love each other, and have children.

ANNA

Yes, you are right. Children would have made a great difference in our lives. They would have been the tie that binds. I wish I could have had children.

TOBY

Well, it aint too late to start now. Grab your old man and beat it for home. Pay less attention to your high society bridge parties, and throw away your twin beds, and you might get some where.

ANNA

My you're an impertinent young man.

TOBY

Now there you are gettin' upstage again. Come on down and Sevneeth Street and you might have kids and be happy.

BELDING

He is right. I'd have been a different man today I guess if I'd had a son, someone that I could leave my wealth too, someone that I could work for and keep straight so he could be proud of me. I had a little boy once---it was by my first wife. I remember that little tot now--how proud I was of him. He was only a few months old, but as strong and bright as any one could be. Some where in this world maybe that son of mine lives, I don't know.

ANNA

How did you ever come to lose your boy, Samuel?

BELDING

Oh I was like I am now---a fool---my wife caught me with another woman she drove me away--I left--came to the city, made money---and then I heard that she had died. I tried to get the boy, but it seemed I couldn't find him.

TOBY

Gee aint you never been able to locate your little boy?

BELDING

No, and I'd give up all I own just to see him--just to get a little glimpse of him.

TOB

Was your little boy ~~brown and black and blue and red~~ a little brown headed kid?

BELDING

Yes, a little brown headed rascal.

TOBY

And did he have a strawberry birthmark on his shoulder?

BELDING

Yes. Why do you ask?

TOBY

Papa! (HOLDS OUT HANDS)

What?

TOBY

You're my old man. I can prove it by gosh. Wasn't your son born in Chillicothe Missouri on Sept 9th, 1910.

BEIDING

Yes, yes.

TOBY

Well, by gosh that's me. You're my old man as sure as the Lord made green apples.

BEIDING

I can't believe it.

TOBY

Believe it or not; it's true. What's the matter are you ashamed of me.

BEIDING

No I'm not. My boy. My little Tobias that I used to rock on my knee (EMBRACES HIM)

TOBY

Boy this is what I call an eventful day. At last I've found my old man. Well, dad, I guess I can have a job in your office now can't I.

BEIDING

You bet you can, my boy.

ANNA

Oh, Samuel, is it really true?

TOBY

You darn right it is. And now you're my mama. Mammy! (HOLDS OUT HANDS) (SHE LOOKS EMBARRASSED) What's the matter? You've got to get used to it. And, dad, I want to tell you something I'm gonna get married---and this is my wife--is it all right.

BEIDING

My boy, I admire your taste.

TOBY

I know darn well you do. (TO MRS. BEIDING) What's the matter with you?

ANNA

Oh you make me feel so old---being like mother to a six foot grown up boy like you. making me the

TOBY

Well, you want to get used to it, because after Betty and me get married I'm gonna make you something else?

ANNA

What?

TOBY

The grandmother of fourteen grandchildren!

( F I N A L E )